

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 ABF-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00
INRE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 H-01
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-07
MC-02 PRS-01 USIE-00 /062 W
-----261310Z 123735 /46

O 261200Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9673
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY OSLO IMMEDIATE
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
CSAF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
OSAF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
ASD WRIGHT PATTERSON AFB OH IMMEDIATE
AFSC ANDREWS AFB MD

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 04154

EMBASSIES ALSO FOR ODCS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, MASS, BE, NE, DA, NO
SUBJECT: F-16 GAO REPORT AND CONGRESSIONAL FUNDING ACTIVITIES

REF: COPENHAGEN 2408 (251907Z APR 77)

SUMMARY: WE WERE URGENTLY CONVOKED BY DEFENSE MINISTER VANDEN
BOEYNANT'S ASSISTANT CHEF DE CABINET (COL. LEFEBVRE) AT THE
MINISTER'S REQUEST APRIL 26. LEFEBVRE RAISED TWO ISSUES:
(A) A REQUEST THAT THE GAO REPORT ON THE F-16 NOT BE PUBLISHED
UNTIL AFTER CONSULTATION WITH EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS AND MOST
EMPHATICALLY NOT BEFORE LOA IS SIGNED, AND (B) LEFEBVRE BRIEFED
US ON WHAT BELGIUM IS DOING TO AVOID A CHAIN REACTION AMONG
EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS BASED ON ACTION OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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RECOMMENDING REDUCTION IN F-16 APPROPRIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. GAO REPORT: LEFEBVRE GAVE US FOLLOWING NOTE
DATED APRIL 26 FROM MINISTER OF DEFENSE (EMBASSY
TRANSLATION):
QUOTE: I HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT THE GAO INTENDS
TO SEND TO THE CONGRESS AND TO RELEASE PUBLICLY A REPORT

ON THE MULTINATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE F-16 PROGRAM. IN ITS PRESENT VERSION THIS REPORT APPEARS TO CONTAIN SEVERAL ERRORS AND RUNS THE SERIOUS RISK OF BEING INCORRECTLY INTERPRETED BY NON-SPECIALISTS. IT FURTHER RUNS THE RISK OF HAVING UNFAVORABLE PUBLIC REPERCUSSIONS AND OF RAISING PROBLEMS INTERNATIONALLY.

QUOTE: I THEREFORE REQUEST IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE FASHION THAT THIS REPORT BE FIRST SUBMITTED TO THE EUROPEANS CONCERNED WITH THE PROGRAM AND THAT IT BE PUBLISHED ONLY WITH A SECURITY CLASSIFICATION WHICH WOULD SERVE TO LIMIT ITS DISTRIBUTION ONLY TO THOSE AGENCIES CONCERNED.

QUOTE: I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR INTERVENTION IN THE FOREGOING SENSE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND FURTHER REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT'S URGENT INTERVENTION SO THAT THE REPORT IN ITS PRESENT FORM NOT BE PUBLISHED. UNQUOTE.

3. LEFEBVRE EXPANDED ON ABOVE TEXT TO NOTE THAT THREE ELEMENTS IN PARTICULAR WOULD CAUSE GREAT PROBLEMS SHOULD THE GAO REPORT IN ITS PRESENT FORM BE PUBLISHED PRIOR TO THE SIGNATURE OF THE LOA. HIS SPECIFIC CONCERNS WERE ON PRICE, ON TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS OF THE AIRCRAFT AND ON QUALITY CONTROL IN EUROPE. HE NOTED THAT DUE TO THE UNIQUE NATURE OF THE F-16 PROGRAM ONE HUNDRED PERCENT OF THE THREE ELEMENTS ABOVE HAD NOT BEEN WORKED OUT. SHOULD ENEMIES OF THE PROGRAM LEARN OF THAT WITHOUT FULL COMPREHENSION OF HOW THE F-16 PROGRAM IS STRUCTURED THEY WOULD BE IN A GOOD POSITION TO CRITICIZE THE EUROPEAN CONFIDENTIAL

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GOVERNMENTS FOR AGREEING TO BUY A NOT FULLY DEFINED AIRCRAFT AT A NOT FULLY DEFINED PRICE AND OF QUESTIONABLE QUALITY.

4. HOUSE ACTION: LEFEBVRE REPORTED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A TELEPHONE CALL FROM THE DANISH MINISTER OF DEFENSE'S OFFICE ALONG THE LINES OF REFTEL. HE TOLD US THAT HE HAD PASSED BACK TO THE DANES HIS MINISTER'S OPINION THAT THE EUROPEANS SHOULD NOT TRY TO FOLLOW U.S. EXECUTIVE-LEGISLATIVE BRANCH MANEUVERING ON THE F-16 ON A DAY TO DAY BASIS. HE TOLD THE DANES THAT ANY FURTHER DELAY IN SIGNATURE OF THE LOA WOULD PLAY INTO THE HANDS OF THE OPPONENTS OF THE F-16 PROGRAM. HE SUGGESTED TO THE DANES THAT IF THE LOA WERE SIGNED THAT WOULD ASSIST THE PROPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM WITHIN THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. THE BELGIAN MOD WANTS TO AVOID A CHAIN REACTION OF FURTHER REQUESTS FOR DELAY IN SIGNATURE OF THE LOA AS THE RESULT OF PUBLIC PRESSURES. SHOULD THE DANES RELEASE THEIR CONCERNS TO THE PRESS THE

BELGIAN POSITION WOULD BE FORCED AS THE ISSUE WOULD
APPEAR IN THE BELGIAN PRESS THE FOLLOWING DAY. ANY
EFFORTS BY ALL PARTIES CONCERNED TO PREVENT THIS
OCCURRENCE WOULD ENHANCE THE POSSIBILITY OF A RETRACTION
OF THE DANISH PROPOSAL.

5. THE BELGIAN MOD HAS SEEN THE APRIL 25 ISSUE OF
AVIATION WEEK. ITS INITIAL REACTION WAS THAT COMMENTS
IN THE F-16 ARTICLE ARE HEDGED SUFFICIENTLY SO THAT IT
CAUSES THEM NO IMMEDIATE PROBLEM. RENNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 26-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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